

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 00891 191304Z

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO USDOC WASHDC

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 6316

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

UNCLAS DAMASCUS 891

KUWAIT FOR BAGHDAD ONLY

INFO POSTS (EXCEPT MOSCOW): PLEASE PASS INFO TO INTERESTED
US FIRMS.

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BTIO, SY, UR

SUBJ: POSSIBLE TRADE OPPORTUNITY VIA SOVIET IRRIGATION PROJECT
IN SYRIA

SUMMARY: SOVIETS REPORT THEY ARE UNABLE TOMXVVVXM FULFILL
EQUIPMENT NEEDS PLEDGED TO SYRIA IN SOVIET-FINANCED PROJECT TO
IRRIGATE AND DEVELOP PORTION OF EUPHRATES BASIN. SOVIET EMBASSY
HAS RECOMMENDED TO SARG TO PURCHASE US EQUIPMENT TO MAKE UP
DEFICIT. END SUMMARY.

1. SOVIET EMBASSY REPRESENTATIVE CALLED UPON COMMERCIAL OFFICER
FEBRUARY 4 TO INFORM HIM THAT, OWING TO EQUIPMENT SHORTAGES IN
THE SOVIET UNION AND OTHER OVERSEAS COMMITMENTS, HIS
GOVERNMENT WAS UNABLE TO DELIVER ALL THE EQUIPMENT PROMISED TO
SARG TO REALIZE SOVIET-FINANCED AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT
PROJECTS IN THE EURPHRATES BASIN (SOVIETS ARE DESIGNING
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PAGE 02 DAMASC 00891 191304Z

IRRIGATION WORKS FOR DEVELOPING SOME 71,000 HA. OF THE 185,000

HA. PROJECT). SOVIET ECONOMIC COUNSELOR VASSILYEV HAS INFORMED SYRIAN MINISTER FOR THE EUPHRATES DAM DR. SUBHI KAHALLEH OF EQUIPMENT SHORTFALL AND ADVISED HIM TO BUY US EQUIPMENT (SOVIET REP SAID SUCH US EQUIPMENT WAS WELL-KNOWN AND RESPECTED IN USSR). KAHALLEH ASKED FOR CATALOGUES AND PRICES; SOVIETS ASKED US EMBASSY TO REQUEST THESE FROM US FIRMS. SOVIET REP STRESSED DECISION AND PAYMENT UP TO SARG; HE WAS UNCERTAIN HOW ANY PURCHASE WOULD BE FINANCED.

2. EQUIPMENT NEEDED (NUMBERS APPROXIMATE; DELIVERY BY END OF MARCH. HORSEBACK US EMBASSY VALUE, INCLUDING DELIVERY, \$10 MILLION);

7 400 HP BULLDOZERS

3 275 HP BULLDOZERS

4 WHEELED EXCAVATORS; LIFTING CAPACITY, 0.6 CU METERS.

2 TRACKED EXCAVATORS; LIFTING CAPACITY, 1.25 METERS.

4 WHEELED EXCAVATORS; LIFTING CAPACITY, 1.25 CU METERS.

(THESE EXCAVATORS FOR DIGGING IRRIGATION CANALS)

3 MACHINES FOR CONTINUOUS LAYING OF CONCRETE CANAL LININGS.

6 TRENCHING AND PIPE-LAYING MACHINES; CAPACITY, ONE KM PER DAY.

3. TURNKEY PLANT: SOVIETS ALSO UNABLE TO SUPPLY, AND HAVE RECOMMENDED SARG BUY US, ONE TURNKEY PLANT TO PRODUCE TILE DRAINAGE PIPE; PIPE 10-15 CM DIAMETER; CAPACITY, 10,000 KM. TO BE LOCATED IN AL-THAWRAH TOWN; DELIVERY "AS SOON AS POSSIBLE."

4. COMMENT: GIVEN UNUSUAL SOURCE OF THIS COMMERCIAL POSSIBILITY, AND FACT SARG HAS ISSUED TO TENDER FOR THE EQUIPMENT AND PLANT, WE REPORT SOVIET REP'S REMARKS TO USDOC SO USDOC MAY DECIDE WHETHER AND/OR IN WHAT MATTER INFORMATION SHOULD BE TRANSMITTED TO US FIRMS. WE HAVE NOTIFIED UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 03 DAMASC 00891 191304Z

SYRIAN AGENTS OF APPROPRIATE US FIRMS WHO ARE FOLLOWING UP. REQUEST INFO POSTS TO PASS INFO TO US COMPANIES RESIDENT IN OR WORKING IN THEIR COUNTRIES. INTERESTED FIRMS SHOULD NOTIFY EMBASSY DAMASCUS AND SEND DOCUMENTATION IF PRACTICABLE.

5. EMBASSY ENDEAVORING TO GET MORE INFORMATION ON THIS POSSIBLE TRADE OPPORTUNITY AND WILL KEEP USDOC ADVISED. MURPHY

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